

a nuclear weapons free world. Of all nations, Kazakhstan has the most legitimate voice, as no other nation has been courageous enough to disarm. Frankly speaking, when it comes to strengthening the global partnership for a nuclear weapons free world, President Nazarbayev has set the standard for other nations to follow.

As Strobe Talbott, President of the Brookings Institution, recently noted, "the goal of eventually abolishing nuclear weaponry is written into the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), which the U.S. Senate ratified nearly 40 years ago." And yet what have the members of the nuclear club done to disarm? In many ways, the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, which includes the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, and the People's Republic of China are the worst examples of how the world should deal with nuclear challenges, but I remain hopeful that the U.S., under the leadership of President Obama, will form a strong alliance with Kazakhstan in moving the world forward on this issue.

Kazakhstan has also made great strides towards democracy, earning the support of 56 member nations to head the OSCE in 2010. Today, Kazakhstan has become the most stable and prosperous nation in Central Asia, and is the first country in the Commonwealth of Independent States to be granted market economy status by the United States. With more than 130 ethnic groups and 40 faiths living in peaceful coexistence, Kazakhstan is also a model for religious tolerance.

By its actions, Kazakhstan has proven itself to be a key ally of the United States and, as such, I welcome Foreign Minister Marat Tazhin's visit to Washington, D.C.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF LIEUTENANT JAMES THOMAS, FIREFIGHTER

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 4, 2009

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, on June 28, 2000, the Baltimore City Fire Department (BCFD)—and indeed, the entire Baltimore community—lost a dedicated and passionate advocate and brother, Mr. James Thomas. He had retired from BCFD in 1992 after nearly 37 years of dedicated service.

Mr. Thomas started his career in 1956 with Engine No. 6, three years after African Americans were allowed to be employed by the fire department. In 1962, as member of Engine No. 8, Jim was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant, which made him the first African American Officer within the BCFD. Jim took on many responsibilities and leadership positions within the BCFD, serving as a fire and safety inspector.

However, as it is widely known firefighters do not ever retire. They just stop going to the fire house everyday and this was also the case for Mr. Thomas. After his retirement, firefighter cadets and those with years of experience often sought out Jim for his advice, guidance, and instruction or simply to listen to his experiences within the BCFD.

Madam Speaker, in addition to being a dedicated firefighter, Jim above all else was a de-

voted husband to his wife Maureen and a man of faith. Although he passed away nearly nine years ago, his life remains an inspiration to us all, speaking volumes for what can be accomplished when a person's faith and determination are synchronized with his conduct. It is my hope that the family and friends of Mr. James Thomas continue to hold on to the fond memories they shared with him.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GLENN THOMPSON

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 4, 2009

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, on rollcall no. 208 I was absent on the evening of April 27, 2009 because I was attending a public meeting at the Allegheny National Forest in Warren, Pennsylvania regarding the pending Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS), ongoing litigation, and the proposed "settlement." Recent Forest Service actions on the Allegheny have created adverse economic distress in my rural district and are unfairly denying my constituents access to their legally owned subsurface mineral rights.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY

HON. MIKE PENCE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 4, 2009

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, I come to the floor today in support of World Press Freedom Day, celebrated on the 3rd day of May each year. I do so with a profound sense of humility and with a sense of privilege about being able to come to the floor to speak in support of freedom of the press around the world.

World Press Freedom Day has been observed for 16 years now and serves as a reminder to us all of the vital importance of this core freedom. It is a day in which we celebrate the indispensable role played by journalists in exposing abuses of power, while at the same time we sound the alarm about the growing number of journalists that are still being silenced by death or jailed as they attempt to report on important issues of the day and bring to light information in the public interest.

Since this day was first celebrated, 692 journalists have been killed. The majority of victims were local reporters covering topics such as crime, corruption, and national security in their home countries. Adding to this tragic figure are the hundreds more each year who face intimidation, censorship, and arbitrary arrest—guilty of nothing more than a passion for truth and a tenacious belief that a free society depends on an informed citizenry. In every corner of the globe—from Iran to Zimbabwe, Burma to Pakistan, Cuba and Venezuela—there are journalists being actively harassed and exercising self-censorship because of threats and intimidation from repressive regimes.

As part of combating this intimidation and censorship, Mr. ADAM SCHIFF of California and

I recently introduced the Daniel Pearl Freedom of Press Act. As many will remember, Daniel Pearl was kidnapped and murdered by terrorists in Pakistan, just 4 months after the September 11th attacks.

At the time of his kidnapping, Pearl served as the South Asia Bureau Chief of the Wall Street Journal, and was based in Mumbai, India. He went to Pakistan as part of an investigation into the alleged links between Richard Reid, the shoe bomber, Al Qaeda and Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence, ISI. He was subsequently beheaded by his captors. This legislation is dedicated to Daniel Pearl, the many that have gone before him, and those that still face such dangers today. The legislation seeks to highlight and promote freedom of the press by establishing an annual State Department report on the status of press freedom in every country in the world and create a grant program aimed at broadening and strengthening the independence of journalists and media organizations.

Now, more than ever, the defense of the freedom of the press must continue. Here at home, the Constitution of the United States provides: "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press." Not since those words were adopted has this body passed a law to ensure the freedom of the press. Last month, the House passed the Free Flow of Information Act of 2009, legislation I was honored to introduce with Representative RICK BOUCHER of Virginia. The bill provides a qualified privilege of confidential sources to journalists—which is sadly missing in Federal law—and enables reporters to shield sources in most instances from disclosure. I urge its swift passage by our colleagues in the Senate.

While it is my great hope that a Federal Media Shield bill will soon be signed into law here at home, the struggle for freedom of the press is much more primitive in its evolution in many parts of the world. And for that reason we must stand in solidarity with all those around the globe who love freedom and continue to strain at the bonds of tyranny and oppression on this day of remembrance.

On this day, we remember reporters like Roxana Saberi. Miss Saberi is a 31-year-old American journalist who was arrested in February 2009, and is being held in Iran on charges of espionage, which her lawyer and the U.S. Department of State call baseless. Saberi is a freelance journalist who moved to Iran 6 years ago and reports for NPR, the BBC, and other news organizations. A true representative of this melting pot that is America, she grew up in Fargo, North Dakota, the daughter of Reza Saberi, who was born in Iran, and Akiko Saberi, who is from Japan.

As we learn of cases like Miss Saberi, we understand the stakes that are at risk here. We understand why oppressive regimes like that of Iran want so desperately to muzzle the unfiltered reporting of journalists like Saberi. And we understand why it is so important to cherish and protect freedom of the press as a vital check on abuses of power. Today, we call on the government of Iran to free Miss Saberi, hospitalized in her desperate attempt to win her freedom with a hunger strike that might appeal to the conscience of her oppressor where her valid legal arguments did not.

As a conservative who believes in limited government, I believe the only check on government power in real time is a free and independent press. A free press ensures the flow

of information to the public, and let me say, during a time when the role of government in our lives and in our enterprises seems to grow every day—both at home and abroad—ensuring the vitality of a free and independent press is more important than ever.

I salute the bravery of reporters and press outlets around the world. I urge you to stand firm and take heart. The U.S. House of Representatives stands firmly behind your right to increased freedoms; soon we hope to see this right enshrined in our public law, and stand in solidarity with those on the front lines of the worldwide fight for freedom of the press.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the *Extensions of Remarks* section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, May 5, 2009 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MAY 6

- 9 a.m.
Appropriations
Energy and Water Development Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine the range of innovative, non-geologic applications for the beneficial reuse of carbon dioxide from coal and other fossil fuel facilities.
SD-192
- 9:30 a.m.
Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
To hold hearings to examine regulating and resolving institutions considered to be too big to fail.
SD-538
- Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine engaging Iran, focusing on obstacles and opportunities.
SD-419
- Veterans' Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Roger W. Baker, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology, William A. Gunn, of Virginia, to be General Counsel, Jose D. Riojas, of Texas, to be Assistant Secretary for Operations, Security, and Preparedness, and John U. Sepulveda, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary for Human Resources, all of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
SR-418

- 10 a.m.
Energy and Natural Resources
Business meeting to consider pending legislation on siting of interstate electric transmission facilities, energy finance, and nuclear energy.
SD-366
- Judiciary
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the Department of Homeland Security.
SD-226
- 2 p.m.
Aging
To hold hearings to examine solutions to stop Medicare and Medicaid fraud from hurting seniors and taxpayers.
SH-216
- 2:15 p.m.
Armed Services
Strategic Forces Subcommittee
To receive a closed briefing to examine space issues.
SVC-217
- 2:30 p.m.
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Communications and Technology Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine the future of journalism.
SR-253
- Foreign Relations
European Affairs Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine NATO post-60, focusing on institutional challenges moving forward.
SD-419

MAY 7

- Time to be announced
Environment and Public Works
Business meeting to consider the nominations of Mathy Stanislaus, of New Jersey, to be Assistant Administrator, Office of Solid Waste, Cynthia J. Giles, of Rhode Island, to be Assistant Administrator for Enforcement and Compliance, and Michelle DePass, of New York, to be Assistant Administrator for International Affairs, all of the Environmental Protection Agency.
Room to be announced
- 9:30 a.m.
Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the report of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States.
SH-216
- 10 a.m.
Appropriations
Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine the 2009 H1N1 virus.
SD-124
- Appropriations
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Subcommittee
To hold an oversight hearing to examine funding of the Department of Justice.
SD-192
- Energy and Natural Resources
To hold hearings to examine a joint staff draft related to cybersecurity and critical electricity infrastructure.
SD-366
- Finance
To hold hearings to examine auctioning under cap and trade, focusing on design, participation, and distribution of revenues.
SD-215
- Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Seth David Harris, of New Jersey, to be Deputy Secretary, and M.

Patricia Smith, of New York, to be Solicitor, both of the Department of Labor.
SD-430

Judiciary

- Business meeting to consider S. 417, to enact a safe, fair, and responsible state secrets privilege Act, S. 257, to amend title 11, United States Code, to disallow certain claims resulting from high cost credit debts, S. 448 and H.R. 985, bills to maintain the free flow of information to the public by providing conditions for the federally compelled disclosure of information by certain persons connected with the news media, S. 327, to amend the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 and the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to improve assistance to domestic and sexual violence victims and provide for technical corrections, and the nominations of William K. Sessions III, of Vermont, to be Chair of the United States Sentencing Commission, and John Morton, of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security.
SD-226
- 10:30 a.m.
Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Krysta Harden, of Virginia, and Pearlie S. Reed, of Arkansas, both to be an Assistant Secretary, Rajiv J. Shah, of Washington, to be Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics, and Dallas P. Tonsager, of South Dakota, to be Under Secretary for Rural Development, all of the Department of Agriculture.
SD-106
- 2 p.m.
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Margaret A. Hamburg, of the District of Columbia, to be Commissioner of Food and Drugs, Department of Health and Human Services.
SD-430
- 2:15 p.m.
Indian Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Larry J. Echo Hawk, of Utah, to be Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Indian Affairs.
SD-628
- 2:30 p.m.
Energy and Natural Resources
Energy Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine net metering, interconnection standards, and other policies that promote the deployment of distributed generation to improve grid reliability, increase clean energy deployment, enable consumer choice, and diversify our nation's energy supply.
SD-366
- Appropriations
Legislative Branch Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2010 for the Office of the Architect of the Capitol, and the Office of Compliance.
SD-138
- Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine recruitment in the federal government.
SD-342
- Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
Securities, Insurance and Investment Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine strengthening the Securities and Exchange